PhD Student Computer Policy

Established:	June, 2017
Revised:	July, 2026
Recommended Review Date:	Yearly
Responsible/Originating Department:	Statistics and actuarial Science in consultation with Math Faculty Computing Facility (MFCF)

Introduction

Starting September, 2024, the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science (SAS) will cover up to $2000 per student to support Ph.D. student computing needs, not including upgraded peripherals. The computers must be used in accordance with the Guidelines on use of Waterloo computing and network resources for students <https://uwaterloo.ca/information-systems-technology/about/policies-standards-and-guidelines/campus-network/guidelines-use-waterloo-computing-and-network-resources>.

Supervisors will be encouraged to discuss the computing options with their students and will have a choice between Mac OS, Windows OS, or Linux Ubuntu OS options.

Conditions

1. Desktop computers must be on campus and connected to the network at all times to receive OS, security, and software updates.
2. Laptops may be removed from campus once an Off-Campus Allocation form is completed and submitted to Carlos Mendes. This form must be signed by both the student and the supervisor.
3. Students will have administrative access to their machine. MFCF will provide a required form to the student that will need to be completed before computers are deployed. This form includes best practices regarding downloading and managing software. If there are issues during software installation, the machine will be reimaged to the original state in which it was received.
4. Student machines are not automatically backed up. Students are responsible for backing up important files using OneDrive, the Math Faculty central file server <https://uwaterloo.ca/math-faculty-computing-facility/mfcf-information-sheet-math-faculty> or other.
5. Students who choose Linux will be responsible for managing their systems, and MFCF will only provide limited support for those systems.
6. The computer remains the property of SAS and the University of Waterloo throughout its usable lifetime and must be returned after the student completes their Ph.D. Students are expected to be responsible and accountable for their device, and to care for it to the best of their ability.

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7. In the event of hardware failure, MFCF will assist in getting hardware support from the vendor if the device it under warranty. For Mac products that are on Apple Care, take the device directly to an Apple Store for support.

Software

Software - Faculty and graduate students (research region) <https://uwaterloo.ca/math-faculty-computing-facility/services/software-faculty-and-graduate-students-research-region>

Students with admin access will now be able to install their own software. For Windows, MFCF will install the main "standard" applications before computer delivery. For the Macs, there is a Self Service section under Applications where students can download apps. Additional software can be requested and set up before delivery by completing a request form <https://rt.math.uwaterloo.ca/selfservice/forms/mfcf/>.

Software that is to be purchased and not available for automated deployment must be coordinated with your supervisor, the department, and MFCF. Installation time depends on various factors.

Technical Specifications

Note: all pricing is subject to change, and is an approximation as of April 2, 2026, and all pricing listed is pre-tax.

Upgrades are available for various models listed below. This form will act as a guide to prepare for a detailed conversation with Carlos about ordering equipment.

Mac OS

Note that Apple Care (warranty) is strongly recommended.

Laptops

- **Standard MacBook Air 15”** - M5 24GB 512GB SSD $2399.00, Apple Care 3yr $239.00
- **Standard MacBook Pro 14”** - M5 24GB, 1TB SSD $3099.00, Apple Care 3yr $303.00
- Other options are available upon request.

Does not include or require external peripherals; monitor, keyboard, or mouse

Desktop

- **Mac Mini** - M4 24GB, 512 SSD $1699.00, Apple Care warranty 3 yr $95.00
    - Other specs are available but this is the recommended option.

*Requires additional peripherals; monitor, display cable, and keyboard/mouse**

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PC – Windows OS (managed) or Linux Ubuntu (unmanaged)

Laptop

- **Dell Pro 14 PC** - u7, 32GB, 512Gb, 4 yr warranty $2067.23

Does not include or require external peripherals; monitor, keyboard, or mouse

Desktop

- **Dell Pro Max Slim** - u7, 32GB, 512GB SSD, wired mouse and keyboard, $2,182.20, 4 yr warranty

Requires additional peripherals; *monitor**

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*The department is not in a financial position to upgrade peripherals and may only provide the standard options listed below. If you choose to upgrade the equipment, then the supervisor(s) will be required to purchase that equipment from a research account in full.

- Standard Department peripheral options:
  - Dell 24" UltraSharp Monitor - $250.00
  - Display cable - $20.00
  - Dell Pro Wireless Keyboard and Mouse - $44.00

This form should only be completed by the faculty supervisor.

You must log in to view this form.

<https://uwaterloo.ca/statistics-and-actuarial-science/>

<https://[illegible]j3ozdrnvzwf2nrq1vg>

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Applied Mathematics <https://uwaterloo.ca/applied-mathematics/>

Combinatorics & Optimization

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Support SAS - Donate

<http://uwaterloo.ca/support/supporting-waterloo/ways-give>

<https://uwaterloo.ca/combinatorics-and-optimization/>

Computer Science <https://cs.uwaterloo.ca/>

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The University of Waterloo acknowledges that much of our work takes place on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples. Our main campus is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land granted to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River. Our active work toward reconciliation takes place across our campuses through research, learning, teaching, and community building, and is co-ordinated within the Office of Indigenous Relations <https://uwaterloo.ca/indigenous>.

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